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Bremmer, J.N.

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ATTIS:  
A GREEK GOD IN ANATOLIAN PESSINOUS AND CATULLAN ROME  
by  
JAN N. BREMMER

To what extent does Catullus give us an idiosyncratic picture of the myth and ritual of Attis? Fordyce gave a firm answer to this question: 'Catullus' Attis bears no resemblance to the Attis of myth and ritual'.<sup>1</sup> But is this true? And who was the Attis of myth and ritual? Attis has been the subject of lively contemporary debate, and we may note at least four recent studies that all go into somewhat different directions. After the long popularity of Frazer's interpretation of Attis as a 'rising and dying god',<sup>2</sup> Walter Burkert was the first to note that the steady increase in new material from the Ancient Near East has refuted this traditional interpretation.<sup>3</sup> He also distinguished various elements of Anatolian provenance in the myth and ritual of Attis, and his is undoubtedly the most innovative modern contribution. Philippe Borgeaud also pays attention to Attis in the course of his study of the Great Mother. He accepts the traditional distinction between a Lydian version as exemplified in Herodotus (§1) and the Phrygian version with Attis' castration. He also argues that Attis took on divine traits only after his transplantation to Greek soil, whereas his ritual eventually derives from Mesopotamian traditions about emasculated priests who are the functional model of Kybele's eunuch priests.<sup>4</sup> Gerhard Baudy also distinguishes an older Lydian version, influenced by the Phoenician Adonis myth,

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<sup>1</sup> C.J. Fordyce, *Catullus: A commentary* (Oxford, 1961) 261

<sup>2</sup> J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough IV: Adonis Attis Osiris*, 2 vols (London, 1914<sup>3</sup>) I.261-317. Frazer had been influenced by W. Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1876) II.291-301.

<sup>3</sup> W. Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1979) 99-111, neglected in her historical survey by M.G. Lancellotti, *Attis between Myth and History: King, Priest and God* (Leiden, 2002) 9-15. Note that one of the most prominent American historians of religion still finds it hard to accept such progress in scholarship, see J.Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine* (Chicago, 1982) 36-46, discussed by Bremmer, *The Rise and Fall of the Afterlife* (London and New York, 2002) 52-5. For an interesting, but eventually unpersuasive, attempt at rehabilitating the notion see now G. Casadio, 'The Failing Male God: Emasculation, Death and Other Accidents in the Ancient Mediterranean World', *Numen* 50 (2003) 231-68 at 235-48.

<sup>4</sup> Ph. Borgeaud, 'L'écriture d'Attis: le récit dans l'histoire', in C. Calame (ed.), *Métamorphoses du mythe en Grèce ancienne* (Geneva, 1988) 87-103 and *La Mère des dieux* (Paris, 1996) 56-88.

and, like Borgeaud, sees in Attis' castration a reflection of the castration of his priests, which he, rather improbably, interprets as a radicalization of a symbolic rite of male initiation.<sup>5</sup> The latest monograph on Attis, by Maria Grazia Lancellotti, connects the Lydian version to 'royal ideologies' of the Ancient Near East, associates the Phrygian version with the local monarchy, and stresses the funerary connotations of the cult.<sup>6</sup>

In my own contribution I will try to reconstruct the myth and ritual of Attis in the period up to Catullus. Religion is a living part of society, and the cult of Attis kept developing until the end of Late Antiquity, but that period is not of interest for an interpretation of Catullus 63. However, even with the stated restriction, it is not easy to get a grip on the early stages of Attis' cult. Our testimonies are few and sometimes difficult to interpret. Moreover, established opinions have too long been accepted - often without being properly scrutinized. In our discussion, we will try to move as much as possible along chronological lines in order to see the myth and ritual of Attis in its historical development. Burkert's results mean that we need not go back behind him, although the older monographs of Hepding and Vermaseren keep their value as collections of material.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, then, we will look at the 'Lydian' complex (§ 1), Attis' arrival in Greece (§ 2), Attis in Phrygia (§ 3), Attis' arrival in Rome and the poem of Catullus (§ 4) and end with some concluding observations (§ 5).

### 1. The 'Lydian' complex

In the nineteenth century, scholars started to connect the Herodotean episode of Atys (1.34-45), the son of Croesus, with Attis.<sup>8</sup> Although obscured in more recent studies, the identification between the two was made within the then dominant nature paradigm: 'Atys, the sun-god, slain by the boar's tusk of winter'.<sup>9</sup> The Herodotean passage is well known. It relates that Croesus had two sons, although Bacchylides (3.34-5) also mentions daughters, and Hellenistic poetry knew of a daughter Nanis,

<sup>5</sup> G. Baudy, 'Attis', *Der neue Pauly* 2 (1997) 247f.

<sup>6</sup> Lancellotti, *Attis*.

<sup>7</sup> H. Hepding, *Attis, seine Mythen und sein Kult* = RGVV 1 (Gieszen, 1903); M.J. Vermaseren: *The Legend of Attis in Greek and Roman Art* (Leiden, 1966); *Cybele and Attis, the Myth and the Cult* (London, 1977); *Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque*, 7 vols (Leiden, 1977-89) and (with M.B. de Boer), 'Attis', in *LIMC* III.1 (1986) 22-44; J. Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess* (Oxford, 2003) 357-63.

<sup>8</sup> H. Stein, *Herodotos erklärt* (Berlin, 1856 and many successive editions) on 1.43; E. Meyer, 'Atys', *RE* II.2 (1896) 2262, soon followed by J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough IV: Adonis Attis Osiris* (London, 1914<sup>3</sup>) 286f. Note that the link was not made by F. Cumont, 'Attis', *RE* II.2 (1896) 2247-52.

who had betrayed Sardis to Cyrus.<sup>10</sup> The eldest, by far the foremost of his contemporaries, was called Atys, although, interestingly, the valuable codex D calls him Attys, and the same variation in the manuscripts can be noticed in Stephanus of Byzantium *s.v.* *Attaluda*. Here the founder of Attalyda is called Attus or Atys (the important codex R).<sup>11</sup> Names like Attas and Attes are epigraphically also much more frequently attested than names with a single *t*.<sup>12</sup> As Croesus had dreamt that a boar would kill Atys, he kept the youth away from all weapons. However, when an enormous boar appeared in Mysia and destroyed the fields, the Mysians sent a delegation to Croesus and ordered him to send his son ‘with elite youths and dogs’ in order to help them. In the end Croesus gave in and sent his son with the Phrygian royal exile Adrastus as his supervisor. Unfortunately, Adrastus killed Atys accidentally during the hunt.

It has often been seen that Herodotus has invented this episode in order to demonstrate the precariousness of Croesus’ happiness and wealth. In his episode he drew on the myth of Meleager, if most likely through the prism of Attic tragedy.<sup>13</sup> Here he found the motif of a hunt on a destructive boar by a prince and a group of young followers, since such a group is lacking in the Adonis myth, which had been introduced into the Attis complex by Hepding and Gruppe.<sup>14</sup> And indeed, Adonis was not connected with Attis before Late Antiquity.<sup>15</sup> However, in Herodotus there is nowhere any mention of Attis, just as there is nothing in the story that even hints at a

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<sup>9</sup> A.H. Sayce, *The Ancient Empires of the East: Herodotos I-III* (London, 1883) 21f.

<sup>10</sup> Licymn., *PMG* 772; Hermesian. F 6 Powell; Parth. F 22 Lightfoot; *FGrH* 252 B (6) = *IG* XIV.1297, cf. M. Haslam, ‘The Fall of Sardis in the Roman Chronicle’, *ZPE* 62 (1986) 198. Lightfoot (*ad loc.*) calls her a ‘romantic creation’ but overlooks that Nanis is an epichoric name, which suggests a relatively old date for her origin, cf. L. Zgusta, *Kleinasiatische Personennamen* (Prague, 1964) 347f.

<sup>11</sup> Lancellotti, *Attis*, 30 note 83 also adduces the Lydian names Adyattes (Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 47) and Sadyattes (Hdt. 1.16.1; *SEG* 45.1584), but their names probably have the same suffix *-ttV-* as that of the Hittite king Maduwatta and should be kept out of the dossier, cf. T. Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites* (Oxford, 1998) 140 note 35.

<sup>12</sup> Zgusta, *Personennamen*, 105-11.

<sup>13</sup> Herodotus probably drew on Sophocles, perhaps his *Meleager*; see most recently the detailed discussion by C. Chiasson, ‘Herodotus’ Use of Attic Tragedy in the Lydian *Logos*’, *Class. Ant.* 22 (2003) 5-35. For a narratological analysis of the episode see I.J.F. de Jong, ‘Aspects narratologiques des *Histoires* d’Hérodote’, *Lalies* 19 (1999) 217-75 at 244-51.

<sup>14</sup> Meleager: see my ‘La plasticité du mythe: Méléagre dans Homère’, in Calame, *Métamorphoses*, 37-55; P. Grossardt, *Die Erzählung von Meleagros* (Leiden, 2000). Adonis: Hepding, *Attis*, 101, followed by O. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1906) II.950.

<sup>15</sup> Porph. F 358 Smith; Macr. *Sat.* 1.21, but note that Varro, *Test.* 540 Cèbe both mentions Adon(is) and is written in galliambics, the metre of poetry for Kybele.

connection with the Phrygian cult.<sup>16</sup> In fact, the name Atys is not even found in palaeo-Phrygian inscriptions, but it is a name with good authority in the earliest Lydian royal genealogies.<sup>17</sup> In his *Roman Antiquities*, Dionysius of Halicarnassus records various Lydian royal genealogies in order to explain the name of the Etruscans. In the first genealogy mentioned by him, the first king of Lydia is called Masnes, one of whose two grandsons was called Atys (1.27.1). As we know that the name Masnes, probably deriving from Masdnes,<sup>18</sup> is well attested for Lydia,<sup>19</sup> whereas in Phrygia we find only Manes,<sup>20</sup> this genealogy must go back to authentic Lydian traditions. It is thus also a guarantee of the name Atys without any connection with Attis. Moreover, Dionysius mentions that Xanthos of Lydia, an elder contemporary of Herodotus, had also already mentioned Atys (1.28.2 = Xanthos *FGrH* 765 F 16). As Herodotus equally mentions Atys as the ancestor of the Lydians (1.7.3) and as a son of Pythios (7.27), he will have drawn for the name on Xanthos, perhaps attracted by the resemblance with the Greek word *atê*, ‘disgrace’ (thus Asheri *ad loc.*).<sup>21</sup>

In fact, the only reason that Atys is associated with Attis is a notice from the Koan poet Hermesianax, who lived around 300 BC. In one of his poems he tells that Attis honoured the Mother to such an extent that Zeus became angry with her<sup>22</sup> and sent a boar against the Lydians that killed not only several Lydians but also Attis himself.<sup>23</sup> In her recent monograph, Lancellotti writes that ‘in the tradition recorded by Pausanias (Hermesianax) ... Attis joined a hunting party with tragic consequences.

<sup>16</sup> *Contra* Lancellotti, *Attis*, 31, who states: ‘If, as is apparent from Herodotus (however, Herodotus nowhere makes any mention of Attis!), the royal prerogatives ascribed to Attis were already characteristic of him in one of his earlier attestations...’; L. Morisi, *Gaio Valerio Catullo Attis* (carmen *LXIII*) (Bologna, 1999) 19-20.

<sup>17</sup> Note that, without any authority, Lancellotti, *Attis*, 25 calls him ‘Attis/Atys’.

<sup>18</sup> L. Robert, *Les noms indigènes dans l’Asie-Mineure gréco-romaine* (Paris, 1963) 101f.

<sup>19</sup> Given that Gallus is the name of the king of Pessinous but also of the adjacent river (§ 3), it is perhaps noteworthy that Masnes is also the name of a Lydian river, cf. Xanth. *FGrH* 765 F 24 (where the name is a conjecture by Jacoby); Hdn., *De prosodia catholica*, 3,1.64; Heph. 5.22 and Choerob. *ad loc.*; *Et. Magnum* 249.17.

<sup>20</sup> O. Masson, ‘Le sceau paléo-phrygien de *Mane*’, *Kadmos* 26 (1987) 109-12; R. Gusmani and G. Polat, ‘Manes in Daskyleion’, *Kadmos* 38 (1999) 137-62. Interestingly, Herodotus (1.94.3) calls him Manes, but Masnes is clearly the older form.

<sup>21</sup> Note that Atys is a conjecture by Jacoby in Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 15.

<sup>22</sup> Unlike Hepding, *Attis*, 30, all modern editions emend the manuscript reading of  $\iota\frac{1}{8}$  into ... $\pi_{77}\delta$ , but the recent Lorenzo Valla edition of Moggi (2000) rightly sticks to the manuscript reading, since the scholion on Nic. *Al.* 8e also stresses that Zeus send the boar because the Meter ‘deemed him (Attis) worthy of honour’.

<sup>23</sup> Hermesian. F 8 Powell = Paus. 7.17.9.

In that tradition the motifs of hunting and the priesthood are connected'.<sup>24</sup> Yet Pausanias mentions neither a hunting party nor a priesthood explicitly, even though the text could perhaps be construed in that direction. On the other hand, he does mention something Lancellotti pays no attention to. Pausanias continues his summary of Hermesianax by writing that 'in consequence of these events the Galatians that inhabit Pessinous do not touch pork' and he stresses that this is not the local myth, which he mentions subsequently and which we will discuss shortly (§ 3). In other words, Hermesianax gave in his poem an aetiological explanation of the Galatians' abstinence from pork, which as a taboo for Attis' worshippers is confirmed by Julian (*Or.* 5.17 Prato). Apparently, we have here an influence from Syria and Phoenicia, as swine were prohibited from Comana in Pontus (Strabo 12.8.9), from the cult of Men (*CRMDM* 12), from that of the Dea Syria (Lucian, *De dea Syria* 54 with Lightfoot *ad loc.*), and among the Phoenicians (Porph. *Abst.* 1.14) – not to mention of course the Jews and Egyptians.<sup>25</sup> There is no reason, then, to suppose that in his explanation Hermesianax drew on old Lydian traditions.

What have we learned so far? In the last decades of the nineteenth century, scholars started to connect the Atys episode in Herodotus with the cult of Attis on the basis of the poem by Hermesianax. However, this poem clearly intended to provide an aetiological explanation for a food taboo in Pessinous but not an insight into epichoric Phrygian or Lydian cult traditions. We therefore conclude that our Greek sources do not connect Attis with Lydia in the archaic and classical period. Consequently, there is no 'Lydian' version, as all recent discussions, with the exception of Burkert, have led us believe.

There is even another argument against the 'Lydian' connection. We actually happen to know that Lydia had its own cult of the (a?) Meter, but her Lydian name is Kuvav- or Kufav-; Herodotus attests her importance by calling her 'Kybebe the native goddess' (5.102.1). Her name continues that of Kubaba, the great goddess of Carchemish on the Euphrates,<sup>26</sup> but the Ionians transcribed the name of this goddess as Kybêbê not Kybele. From Lydia she must already have been early accepted among the Greeks, as the seventh-century Semonides calls a follower of Kybele a *kybêbos* (F

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<sup>24</sup> Lancellotti, *Attis*, 58.

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of the taboo on pigs see Bremmer, 'Modi di comunicazione con il divino: la preghiera, la divinizzazione e il sacrificio nella civiltà greca', in S. Settis (ed.), *I Greci I* (Turin, 1996) 239-83 at 251f.

36 West<sup>26</sup>), just like Cratinus in his *Thraittai* (F 87 KA) of about 430 BC,<sup>27</sup> and in the sixth century Hipponax calls her ‘Kybêbê daughter of Zeus’ (F 125 Degani<sup>2</sup> = 127 West<sup>2</sup>); in fact, a recently published sixth-century Locrian inscription still has the form K(y)baba (*SEG* 49.1357). Given that Lydia had its own Meter, it seems odd that the Lydians should have imported into Sardis a figure from Pessinous, whose cultic existence anyway is not even established for that time. And indeed, Attis’ cult is not attested in Lydia before the third century AD.<sup>28</sup>

As we have neither Lydian nor indigenous Phrygian epigraphical, literary or iconographical sources about Attis as cultic figure before Roman times, we will first look at the god’s arrival in Greece, as in the older testimonies we see him only through Greek eyes.

## 2. *The arrival of Attis in Greece*

Hermesianax’s poem shows that Attis had already become known in Greece at the beginning of the third century, but when exactly did he become accepted into the Greek world? For our purpose, we can draw on archaeological, literary and epigraphical sources, which all seem remarkably to converge on more or less the same date.<sup>29</sup> The oldest testimony for Attis is usually seen in the Old Comedy dramatist Theopompus, but the surviving fragment ‘I will punish you and that Attis of yours’ rather indicates a human lover;<sup>30</sup> in fact, we find at least three Attides, two Attas and one Attos in fourth-century Athens.<sup>31</sup> The earliest securely identified image of Attis is a votive stele of the Piraeus from the middle to the third quarter of the fourth century BC with the inscription ‘Timothea to Angdistis and Attis on behalf of her children according to command’ (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 4671). The stele probably is our earliest testimony for the cult of Attis in Athens *tout court*.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte* (Rome, 1985) 111.

<sup>27</sup> Note that Borgeaud, *La Mère*, 61 wrongly ascribes the form *kubébis* to Cratinus.

<sup>28</sup> M. Paz de Hoz, *Die lydischen Kulte im Lichte der griechischen Inschriften* (Bonn, 1999) no’s 12.1, 12.2.

<sup>29</sup> Burkert, *Structure*, 104 and Morisi, *Catullo*, 19-22 provide the most recent surveys, but some progress can be made, as I hope to show in this section.

<sup>30</sup> Theopomp. F 28 with Kassel and Austin *ad loc.* *Contra* Hepding, *Attis*, 99; Burkert, *Structure*, 104.

<sup>31</sup> P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews, *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* II (Oxford, 1994) 78f.

<sup>32</sup> Vermaseren, *Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque* II (Leiden, 1982) no. 308 = F. Naumann, *Die Ikonographie der Kybele in der phrygischen und der griechischen Kunst* (Tübingen, 1983) pl. 40.1 = L. Roller, ‘Attis on Greek Votive Monuments’, *Hesperia* 63 (1994) 245-62 at

In any case, the late date well fits with the earliest literary mentions. In his *On the Crown* Demosthenes mentions that Aeschines called out in the private mysteries of his mother ‘*Hyês, Attês*’ (18.260). Wilamowitz magisterially rejected the passage as a testimony for the cult of Attis and noted: ‘so weiss man in demosthenischer Zeit noch nichts von Attis’ and he has been followed in modern times.<sup>33</sup> Yet the already quoted stele from the Piraeus demonstrates that Wilamowitz was wrong. The chronological value of the testimony is a different question, though. It is hardly credible that Demosthenes would have known exactly what Aeschines’ mother did in his youth. However, it is in his interest to impress his audience with contemporary rituals. That is why he presents this *bricolage* of several ecstatic cults. In other words, the cry should be taken as an indication of the existence of Attis’ cult in 330 BC rather than at the time of Aeschines’ youth.

Demosthenes also furnishes another detail of interest. He suggests that Aeschines performed in front of old women. The audience conforms to our impression of the general following of new cults in Athens, which attracted women in particular.<sup>34</sup> In this connection, it is noteworthy that the first dedication to Attis (above) was by a woman, perhaps a slave or a foreigner in Athens, just as a maiden worships Agdistis in, probably, Menander’s *Theophoroumene*.<sup>35</sup>

The last early testimony derives from Neanthes of Cyzicus (*FGrH* 84 F 37), who apparently discussed Attes as a servant of the Mother of the Gods among the Phrygians. The recent re-edition of Philodemus’ ‘*Academicorum Index*’ has shown that Neanthes has to be put into the fourth century.<sup>36</sup> An interest in Attis in Cyzicus is hardly surprising. Herodotus had already reported about the impressive *pannychis* of the Meter,<sup>37</sup> and Nicander of Kolophon (*Al.* 7-8) situated ‘the place of the secret rites

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pl. 55.1 = E. Vikela, ‘Bemerkungen zu Ikonographie und Bildtypologie der Meter Kybele Reliefs’, *Athen. Mitt.* 116 (2001) 67-123 at 116-17 with pl. 23.2.

<sup>33</sup> U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Kleine Schriften* II (Berlin, 1941) 2, followed by P. Lambrechts, *Attis. Van herdersknaap tot god* (Brussels, 1962) 22 note 1; H. Wankel on Dem. 18.260, although he does not provide an alternative explanation of the word.

<sup>34</sup> J.N. Bremmer, *Greek Religion* (Oxford, 1999<sup>2</sup>) 72.

<sup>35</sup> Men. *Theoph.* fr. dub. on p. 146, ed. Sandbach, cf. E. Handley, *BICS* 16 (1969) 96.

<sup>36</sup> T. Dorandi, *Storia dei Filosofi* (Naples, 1991) col. II.38-9, III.35 and a scholion in margin of col. V (*FGrH* 84 F 23), cf. W. Burkert, ‘Philodems Arbeitstext zur Geschichte der Akademie’, *ZPE* 97 (1993) 87-94 at 92: ‘Die Lebenszeit dieses Neanthes rückt damit etwas weiter zurück ins 4.Jh.’ Following Jacoby, Borgeaud, *La Mère*, 66 still puts Neanthes at 180 BC.

<sup>37</sup> Hdt. 4.76.3-4, cf. B. Bravo, *Pannychis e simposio* (Pisa and Rome 1997) 119, who observes that these nightly festivals were typical of the cults of Kybele and Dionysos. Note that in his



of Attes' in the 'caverns of Lobrinian Rhea', Lobrinon being a mountain in Cyzicus (schol. *ad loc.*). It is therefore perhaps hardly chance that we find the name Attes already in Cyzicus around 300 BC (*I. Kyzikos* 101).<sup>38</sup> As the Mother herself,<sup>39</sup> Attis too may well have reached mainland Greece via the Hellespont and the Propontis.

Our analysis so far has shown that Attis started to become known in the Greek world in the last decades of the fourth centuries, where he seems to have been particularly worshipped by women. Yet the conquest of Asia Minor would be required before the Greeks could read more detailed reports on the Phrygian myth and ritual of Attis. From about 300 BC onwards, different reports started to appear that would reveal (or not!) startling details of a strange myth and ritual. It is time to look at Phrygia itself.

### 3. *Attis in Phrygia*

The continuing publication of ancient Phrygian texts has also enriched the dossier of Attis. In 1982 an inscription dating to the seventh or sixth century BC was published with a dedication to Atas/Ata.<sup>40</sup> As *atas* means 'father' in the meaning of 'father as fosterer',<sup>41</sup> the editors suggest that we perhaps may find here a male, if somewhat inferior, companion for the main Phrygian goddess *Matar*, 'Mother'. However, it seems hard to see in this Atas the same supra-human being as Attis, since the latter is in no way connected with fatherhood. In other words, our modest knowledge of Phrygian religion does not allow us any trace of Attis before the Macedonian conquest of Asia Minor opened up the hinterland to the curiosity of the Greeks. However, already within a few decades they could learn about this strange cult from at least three, possibly four, sources with only a difference of half a century at the most between them, viz. from Timotheus, Hermesianax, Dionysius Scythobrachion (?) and the author I call Anonymus Ovidianus. Let us start with the oldest version.

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discussion Bravo overlooks the onomastic evidence: Pannych(i)os was a highly popular male name, as was Pannychis, if to a lesser extent, among women.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. her temple in Cyzicus (Amm. Marc. 22.8.5), which has been excavated, cf. Vermaseren *Corpus Cultus Cybelae*, I.91-97; the poem on a Gallus by Erucius of Cyzicus (*AP* 6.234 = 2256-61 GP) and the connection between the Argonauts, Cyzicus and Dindymon/a in Neanthes *FGrH* 84 F 39 (Strabo 12.8.11, cf. 12.8.11), Apoll. Rhod. 1.1092-1152 and Val. Flacc. 3.20-2.

<sup>39</sup> Graf, *Nordionische Kulte*, 113f.

<sup>40</sup> C. Brixhe and M. Lejeune, *Corpus des inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes*, 2 vols (Paris, 1984) I.W-10.

<sup>41</sup> E. Benveniste, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes*, 2 vols (Paris, 1969) II.87f.

Around 300 BC, under the rule of Ptolemy I, the Athenian Eumolpid Timotheus published an account of Kybele and her rites, which Burkert calls the *hieros logos* of Pessinous.<sup>42</sup> However, this is only partially correct as we will see below. Our source for Timotheus is Arnobius (5.5-8),<sup>43</sup> who devoted a large passage to the Mother and Attis around AD 300.<sup>44</sup> Timotheus had made Serapis palatable to the Alexandrian Greeks (Tac. *Hist.* 4.83), and we may assume that his purpose was to make Kybele and her cult equally palatable to them, perhaps as part of plans of Ptolemy to conquer Western Asia Minor. In this respect it seems significant that Varro combined the cults of both Kybele and Serapis in his *Eumenides*. As we do not find this combination anywhere else, Varro may well have found it in Timotheus' book, which was still available in Rome in his time – witness its use by Alexander Polyhistor (*FGrH* 273 F 74), who worked in Rome at the same time as Varro.

According to Arnobius (5.5), Timotheus pretended that he had his knowledge *ex reconditis antiquitatum libris* and *ex intimis mysteriis*, but these protestations only demonstrate the strong necessity he felt to authenticate his strange story. An appeal to antiquity while relating a myth was a well-known device from Hellenistic times onwards, and Timotheus must have been one of the first to use it.<sup>45</sup> We do not know Arnobius' source(s?) for Timotheus, whom he calls 'no mean mythologist' (5.5),<sup>46</sup> but Arnobius often uses Varro,<sup>47</sup> although the latter explicitly declined to talk about Attis and the Galli in his theology – an interesting testimony to the attitude of the Roman elite towards his cult.<sup>48</sup>

In any case, in addition to Timotheus, Arnobius had also consulted *alios aequae doctos*, whose influence, even though they remain anonymous, we sometimes can

<sup>42</sup> W. Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge MA and London, 1987) 73

<sup>43</sup> E. Fantham, *Ovid, Fasti, Book IV* (Cambridge, 1999) 138 strangely states that Arnobius uses a 'garbled' version of Pausanias.

<sup>44</sup> See the analysis by F. Mora, *Arnobio e i culti di mistero* (Rome, 1994) 116-34.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Call. F 612 Pfeiffer; Verg. A. 9.79; Ov. *Met.* 1.400, F. 4.203-4.

<sup>46</sup> More recently, E. Lane, 'The Name of Cybele's Priests, the Galloi', in idem (ed.), *Cybele, Attis and Related Cults* (Leiden, 1996) 117-33 at 128 note 21 has doubted the identification. He is followed by L. Roller, *In Search of God the Mother. The Cult of Anatolian Cybele* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1999) 244 note 20 and Lancellotti, *Attis*, 85 note 121, but this is hypercritical in the light of Alexander Polyhistor's mention of Timotheus. For some, possibly, additional references to Timotheus see R. Turcan, 'Attis Platonius', in Lane, *Cybele*, 387-403 at 388.

<sup>47</sup> For his great indebtedness to Varro see H. le Bonniec, *Arnobio, Contre les Gentils, Livre I* (Paris, 1982) 48f.

<sup>48</sup> Aug. *De civ. Dei* 7.25: *Et Attis ille (Varro) non est commemoratus nec eius ab isto interpretatio requisita est, in cuius dilectionis memoriam Gallus absciditur.*

distinguish. We will discuss these cases below at their appropriate moments, but we may already mention them: the entering by the Mother of the city ‘having raised the walls with her head, which in consequence began to be crowned with turrets’, the presence of the pine under which Attis had castrated himself, and the end of Timotheus’ account, where it is said that his body would not decompose and, rather morbidly, that his little finger continued to move. Arnobius mentions only one source by name, and that only incompletely: *Valerius pontifex* (5.7), who had called Attis’ bride Ia. Given the interest in Attis and Kybele in the first half of the first century BC (§ 4), this is most likely Valerius Messalla Niger, who was pontifex in 81 BC.<sup>49</sup> His invention must have been stimulated by the prominence of the violet in the Roman ritual of Attis and Roman funerary cult,<sup>50</sup> since we hear nothing of the kind for Asia Minor. Here the blood of Attis was believed to have caused the purple veins in the marble of Phrygian Synnada.<sup>51</sup>

So, what did Timotheus tell us?<sup>52</sup> From stones taken from the rock Agdus (below) in Phrygia, Deucalion and Pyrrha made the Great Mother. When Zeus unsuccessfully attempted to rape her, he poured out his semen on a rock. This produced the fierce, hermaphroditic Agdistis. In order to tame him, Dionysos lured him to a spring with wine, and tied his testicles to a noose. When Agdistis awoke from his hangover and tried to get up, he unwittingly castrated himself. As Burkert has seen, the beginning of this episode closely resembles the beginning of the Hittite myth of Ullikumi, where we also find the birth of a monstrous figure from a rock.<sup>53</sup> Getting Agdistis drunk, on the other hand, is of course a calque on the catching of Silenus by Midas. This myth was narrated in the very same area, as is illustrated by the mention of the well of Midas in Ankyra (below).<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> *ILS* 46; R. Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy* (Oxford, 1986) 227. R. Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, tr. A. Nevill (Oxford, 1996) 34 and ‘Attis Platonicus’, 389 suggests that Arnobius confused him with the *augur* M. Valerius Messalla, consul in 53 BC. This is not impossible but hardly necessary, given our dearth of sources.

<sup>50</sup> F. Bömer on *Ov. F.* 5.227.

<sup>51</sup> L. Robert, *A travers de l’Asie Mineure* (Paris, 1980) 221-26 and *Opera minora selecta* VII (Amsterdam, 1990) 109-21.

<sup>52</sup> For several observations on his account see also Turcan, *Cults of the Roman Empire*, 31-35.

<sup>53</sup> Burkert, *Structure*, 197-8 convincingly illustrates the resemblances in two parallel columns; for a more detailed discussion, Burkert, *Kleine Schriften II: Orientalia* (Göttingen, 2003) 87-95. For translations of the passage see H. Hoffner, *Hittite Myths* (Atlanta, 1990) 52; J.V. García Trabazo, *Textos religiosos hititas* (Madrid, 2002) 185-7.

<sup>54</sup> For all testimonies see M.C. Miller, ‘Midas’, in *LIMC* VIII.1 (1997) 846-51. Note that the archaeological testimonies well predate the earliest literary one (Hdt. 8.138).

When a pomegranate had sprung from the blood of Agdistis, Nana, the daughter of the local king or river Sangarius, placed it in her bosom and became pregnant. Her father then shut her up, but the Mother of the Gods kept her alive. After the father had her child exposed, a certain Phorbas, ‘Nourisher’, found him, raised him on goat’s milk and called the boy Attis, ‘as the Phrygians call their goats *attagi*’. When the latter grew up, he roamed the woods with Agdistis, who loved him - if naturally somewhat inadequately. Under the influence of wine Attis confessed his love and that is why those drinking wine are forbidden to enter his sanctuary. This episode is a mixture of the theme of ‘the mother’s tragedy’ (exemplified by Greek heroines like Io and Danae), of the fostering of heroes (exemplified by the fostering of Zeus by a goat),<sup>55</sup> and of the aetiological explanation of the prohibition of wine. At the same time, Timotheus kept a certain *couleur local* in the story by his usage of the epicchoric names Nana (§ 1) and Sangarius.<sup>56</sup> We may assume that he had made proper enquiries before adapting the local lore to his sophisticated Alexandrian public.

In the final part of the story the king intended to give his daughter in marriage to Attis, but the Mother of the Gods wanted to prevent the marriage and entered the city. At this point Agdistis filled the guests with frenzy and the daughter of a certain Gallus cut off her breasts, apparently an ‘alternative’ castration. This Gallus had not yet been introduced, and clearly something has gone wrong in the text, as Oehler already noted in his 1846 edition of Arnobius by comparing c. 5.13 where Gallus is spoken of as having already mutilated himself. However, Oehler did not notice that Alexander Polyhistor (*FGrH* 273 F 74) had also mentioned ‘that Gallos and Attis had cut off their sexual organs’, a notice most likely derived once again from Timotheus. In his account of the Attis cult, Pausanias (7.17.12) mentions that Attis also cut off the private parts of his father-in-law. Gallus will therefore have been the name of the king, even though this does not fit well with the name Midas, which is also used by Arnobius for the king.

In this frenzy Attis castrated himself under a pine tree, and the Mother of the Gods collected his parts and buried them; she also brought the pine tree to her cave.

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<sup>55</sup> For the themes of the mother’s tragedy and the fostering of heroes see J.N. Bremmer and N.M. Horsfall, *Roman Myth and Mythography* (Rome, 1987) 27-30, 54-6 (by Bremmer); Bremmer, ‘Amaltheia’, in *Der neue Pauly* I (Stuttgart and Weimar, 1996) 568-9.

<sup>56</sup> For a Sangarios at Pessinous and a discussion of the name see Robert, *Noms*, 536-7; add now the local Sagarios and Sagaria (*SEG* 41.1152, 45.1706); note also the Galatian Sagaris (*SEG* 30.1473).

She was joined in her howling wailing by Agdistis who beat and wounded her breast. From Attis' blood sprung the violet, which even today decorates the pine tree - so clearly Arnobius himself. Zeus refused to revive Attis, but he allowed his body to remain undecayed, with even some movement left in his little finger. Agdistis buried the body in Pessinous and honoured Attis with yearly rituals and high priests.

The final episode starts with perhaps another survival from Near Eastern mythology. Burkert has persuasively compared the entry of the Mother with the advent of Inanna from the netherworld and her entering Dumuzi's palace to destroy him.<sup>57</sup> The raising of the walls (above) made the Mother into the Ovidian *dea turrigera* (F. 6.321),<sup>58</sup> but the detail must be a later addition, since Kybele's *Mauerkrone* is archeologically not attested before about 240 BC.<sup>59</sup> The presence of a pine tree is somewhat surprising, since this tree is not attested in Attis' Greek cult and neither are pine cones found in Attis' Greek iconography.<sup>60</sup> On the other hand, the pine was an important part of the later Roman ritual of Attis, and its prominence here clearly serves to explain its role in the famous ritual of the *Arbor intrat* in the West. A further reference to the actual cult of the Mother must be the mention of the cave, which was associated with the Mother in Asia Minor,<sup>61</sup> even though this feature did not survive the transfer to Rome. Apparently, Timotheus merely mentioned that the Mother of the Gods brought the (pine?) tree into her cave, but Arnobius (5.14) already wondered what had happened in that case to Attis' member. And indeed, we probably catch here Timotheus in the act of 'cleaning up' the story before presenting it to the Alexandrians, since in Cyzicus those that had castrated themselves did deposit their member in 'holy subterranean places'.<sup>62</sup> The howling wailing is a typical feature of the cult of Attis and is often mentioned in Latin literature (§ 4). Last but certainly not least, the most interesting item in Timotheus' account is undoubtedly the description of Attis' body. But how old is this morbid passage?

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<sup>57</sup> Burkert, *Structure*, 110.

<sup>58</sup> For literary references see R.J. Tarrant on Sen. Ag. 688.

<sup>59</sup> E. Simon, 'Kybele', in *LIMC* VIII.1 (1997) 744-66 at 751 no. 24.

<sup>60</sup> Roller, *In Search of the Mother*, 279; Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 500f.

<sup>61</sup> Eur. *Ba.* 123; Nic. *Al.* 8; Rhian. *AP* 6.173 (=3236-41 GP); Diosc. *AP* 6.220 (= 1539-54 GP); Sil. It. 17.21; Paus. 10.32, cf. L. and J. Robert, *Bull. Ep.* 1970, 590; H. Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle* (Paris, 1912) 394.

<sup>62</sup> Schol. Nic. *Al.* 8b. For the various destinations of the genitals of eunuchs, see Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle*, 297; Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 508.

It is not easy to gain a precise insight into the definitive fate of Attis. In our oldest testimonies, there seems to be no interest in his body (Hermesianax) or it is considered to have been buried first before completely disappearing (Dionysius Scythobrachion [?]: below). In his *Bithyniaka*, Arrian (*FGrH* 156 F 22) also mentions that Attis' worshippers went into the mountains and called out for him. Pausanias' mention of Attis' grave (1.4.5) thus seems to reflect this early situation.<sup>63</sup> Apparently, things started to change in the second century AD when Pausanias (7.17.12) relates that his body would not see corruption; Arnobius' mention of the moving little finger probably has to be assigned to the same period. Clearly, Attis was moving upwards in Pausanias' time, and that is why, presumably, Tertullian could already refer to him as *deum a Pessinunte* (*Ad nat.* 1.10.47). However, Attis' 'resurrection' is not mentioned before the third century and seems closely connected with the rise of Christianity, just like the 'resurrection' of Adonis is not mentioned before the third century.<sup>64</sup> These testimonies strongly suggest that Attis' body only gradually became of interest to his worshippers, but in Catullus' time none of this is yet visible.

The second early account was provided in the first decades of the third century by Hermesianax of Kolophon, who recounted that Attes (he does not write 'Attis', which is not an epichoric spelling: below) was a son of the Phrygian Kalaos and unfit to procreate. When he had grown up, he moved to Lydia and introduced the rites of the Mother of the Gods to the Lydians. Subsequently, he met the sad fate through a boar that we have already discussed (§ 1). The father's name looks like a variant of Gallus (below), and the impotence a euphemism for his castration. Apparently, Hermesianax did not think his audience fit for the more awkward details of the cult; that is probably why we also do not hear anything about Agdistis. Moreover, he limits himself to portraying Attis as a missionary of the Mother to the Lydians. This is perhaps not surprising. Kolophon was adjacent to Lydia and knew a flourishing cult of the Mother, whose temple was already an important local institution since the seventh century.<sup>65</sup>

Our third early account has been handed down by Diodorus Siculus (3.58-9), but the place within his oeuvre and its euhemerising tone almost certainly guarantee

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<sup>63</sup> Thus, persuasively, G. Thomas, 'Magna Mater and Attis', *ANRW* II.17.3 (1984) 1500-35 at 1520. Note also the mention of Attis' burial in Servius Auctus on Verg. *A.* 9.116.

<sup>64</sup> Attis: Hippol. *Ref.* 5.8.22-24; Firm. Matern. *Err.* 3.1; Damasc. *F.* 87A Athanassiadi. Adonis: Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 309-11.

that he derived the story from Dionysius Scythobrachion, the euhemerising mythographer of the middle of the third century.<sup>66</sup> It relates that king Meion of Lydia and Phrygia had married Dindyme, by whom he begot a daughter. After he had exposed her on Mt Kybel(l)on,<sup>67</sup> she was fed by animals, and female (!) shepherds called her therefore Kybele. Growing up she invented the syrinx,<sup>68</sup> cymbals and tambourines; not surprisingly, her best companion was Marsyas. She even cared so much for the young animals that they gave her the name ‘Mother of the Mountain’. Having arrived at a suitable age, she fell in love with Attis, became pregnant and was recognized by her parents. When her father had killed her nurses and Attis,<sup>69</sup> Kybele became mad and started to roam in the country accompanied by Marsyas. In the end Marsyas challenged Apollo to a duel on the double flute, lost and was flayed alive. When an illness had struck Phrygia, Apollo gave orders to bury Attis and to honour Kybele. As his body had already decomposed, the Phrygians made an image of Attis and chanted songs of lamentation until the present day. For Kybele they built a splendid temple in Pessinous with sumptuous sacrifices. Next to her statue they placed panthers and lions, as they had fed her when a child.

It is obvious that this account is not part of ‘the dossier concerning the attempt by the (Lydian) Mermnad dynasty to reconstruct a Phrygian “prehistory” in order to guarantee its own legitimacy to the throne.’<sup>70</sup> Far from it. It combines a euhemerising version of the myth of Kybele and Attis with that of Marsyas, another Phrygian myth. It makes Attis the beloved of Kybele and mentions her ecstatic side, but, as was the case with Hermesianax, it makes no mention of the hermaphroditic Agdistis nor does it mention Attis’ castration. Clearly, several authors thought that Greece was not yet ready for the cult of Attis in all its strange aspects.

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<sup>65</sup> Graf, *Nordionische Kulte*, 113.

<sup>66</sup> So, persuasively, B. Bommelaer, *Diodore Sicule, Bibliothèque historique, livre III* (Paris, 1989) xxxiii-v.

<sup>67</sup> Bommelaer, *Diodore III*, and Borgeaud, *La Mère*, 67 wrongly translate with ‘Cybélos’ and ‘Kubelos’, respectively.

<sup>68</sup> For the syrinx see Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 487.

<sup>69</sup> The mention of nurses is rather surprising. Can it be that they are the mythical reflection of priestesses, since Diod. Sic. 34.33 mentions a priestess in Pessinous in 204 BC? Or are they the women that are regularly associated with the Galli, cf. Rhian. *AP* 6.173 (= 3236-41 GP) and Thyill. *AP* 7.223?

<sup>70</sup> *Contra* Lancellotti, *Attis*, 44.

The date of the fourth account has to remain obscure, but seems to find its origin in an Alexandrian context.<sup>71</sup> In his *Fasti* (4.223-46), Ovid relates that Attis had fallen in love with Kybele, who pressed him in promising that he would remain a boy forever. However, he broke his promise and fell in love with the nymph Sagaritis. Kybele took revenge by killing the nymph, at which Attis lost his mind. Imagining that the Furies pursued him, he ran to the top of Mt Dindymon where he castrated himself. Once again we have here a relatively ‘sanitised’ version of the myth: there is no mention of copulation with a rock or the hermaphrodism of Agdistis, but the castration receives full attention – as could have been expected from Ovid.

In its simplicity, Ovid’s account also conforms to that of Pausanias (7.17.10-12), whose account largely overlaps with that of Timotheus, as Hepding already saw. According to Pausanias, Zeus copulated with a rock and thus begot the hermaphroditic Agdistis, whom the gods castrated. From his organ there grew an almond tree, of which a fruit made the daughter of the river Sangarios (Ovid’s Sagaritis) pregnant. A boar raised the child, Attis, who grew into a very handsome young man. When he was going to get married to the daughter of the king, Agdistis appeared, whereupon Attis, in a frenzy, castrated himself and the king. Agdistis repented, and he requested Zeus not to let Attis’ body be corrupted or rot away.

In his chronological enumeration, Hepding prints Pausanias’ notice in a column parallel to Timotheus’ account. This procedure has had the unhappy effect that not even Burkert differentiates between the two.<sup>72</sup> However, there is a remarkable difference between the two accounts. Whereas Timotheus mentions Agdistis and the Mother of the Gods, Pausanias mentions only Agdistis. On the other hand, Hermesianax, Dionysius Scythobrachion and the Anonymus Ovidianus make no mention of Agdistis but only of Kybele. How can we explain these differences?

We know that Pausanias wrote in the last quarter of the second century AD, came from Magnesia on Mount Sipylus,<sup>73</sup> and had observed that in ‘his own time’ the

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<sup>71</sup> P.E. Knox, ‘Representing the Great Mother to Augustus’, in G. Herbert-Brown (ed.), *Ovid’s Fasti* (Oxford, 2002) 155-74 at 167-70.

<sup>72</sup> *Contra* Hepding, *Attis*, 104; Burkert: *Structure*, 190 note 23, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 73 and *Kleine Schriften* II, 93; similarly, Lancellotti, *Attis*, 23, who also did not notice that Pausanias distinguishes between the versions of Hermesianax (who is not even mentioned in her index) and Pessinous: source criticism is a weak side of especially the first part of her book.

<sup>73</sup> For Pausanias’ time and place see Ch. Habicht, *Pausanias’ Guide to Ancient Greece* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1985) 9-15; W. Ameling, ‘Pausanias und die hellenistische



well of Midas in the temple of Zeus was still shown in Ankyra, which was not that far from Pessinous. As he accurately locates Pessinous ‘below Mount Agdistis where they say that Attis was buried’ (1.4.5), there is thus every reason to believe that he had visited Pessinous himself and made some inquiries.<sup>74</sup> As he himself stresses that he relates the local myth (*epichôrios logos*), we should not conflate his account with that of Timotheus, but consider Pausanias’ notice a most valuable witness for what was narrated in Pessinous towards the end of the second century AD.

This conclusion naturally raises the question as to why Pausanias did not hear anything about Kybele, but we can understand this problem only when we now try to reconstruct the history and meaning of the myth and ritual at Pessinous. We have already looked at a number of details when discussing the various versions, but now we will try to present in broad strokes an integral picture of the Pessinuntine cult. Let us start once again by looking at the mythical protagonists. Timotheus, our earliest extensive source, mentions four names that also recur in the other reports: the Mother of the Gods (in other versions called Kybele), Agdistis, Gallus and Attis. The occurrence of the Mother of the Gods is probably due to the influence of Kybele. As two sixth-century Phrygian inscriptions show, Kybele was worshipped in Phrygia itself as *matar kubileya* or *kubeleya*, ‘Mother of Mt Kubel(l)on or Kubela’.<sup>75</sup> In the seventh century she was already ‘exported’ to Greece. Here, from the early fifth century onwards, she became known either more general as *Matâr oureia*, ‘Mountain Mother’,<sup>76</sup> or more specifically as *Matâr Idaia*, ‘Mother of Mt Ida’,<sup>77</sup> or *Mêtêr Dindymenê*, ‘Mother of Mt Dindymon/a’,<sup>78</sup> the mountain that gave the name to the

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Geschichte’, in J. Bingen (ed.), *Pausanias historien = Entretiens Hardt* 41 (Geneva, 1996) 117-60 at 156-7 (after AD 170).

<sup>74</sup> For Pausanias’ interest in interviewing people, see Ø. Andersen, in Bingen, *Pausanias historien*, 271f.

<sup>75</sup> Brixhe and Lejeune, *Corpus des inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes*, W-04, B-03. Note that the manuscripts have *Kybellon* in Steph. Byz. s.v.  $\epsilon\beta\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\eta$ ; note also the plural *Kybella* in Schol. Lyc. 1170; the same strange alternation of singular and plural also in Dindymon/Dindyma (note 78). Jacoby (on Alex. Polyh. *FGrH* 273 F 12) rejected the etymology, but C. Brixhe, ‘Le nom de Cybèle’, *Die Sprache* 25 (1979) 40-5 and L. Zgusta, ‘Weiteres zum Namen der Kybele’, *Die Sprache* 28 (1982) 171-2 have since convincingly defended it.

<sup>76</sup> *Hom. Hymn* 14.1; *Pind. fr.* 70b.9, 95.3 Maehler; *Ar. Av.* 746, 873ff; *Telestes, PMG* 810.2-3; *Eur. fr.* 472.13 N<sup>2</sup>; *Tim. Pers.* 124.

<sup>77</sup> *Eur. Or.* 1453; for her cult on Ida see also *Eur. Helen*, 1323-24, fr. 586 N<sup>2</sup>, to be read with the observations on the text by S. Radt in A. Harder et al. (eds.), *Noch einmal zu...Kleine Schriften von Stefan Radt zu seinen 75. Geburtstag* (Leiden, 2002) 439-40; Varro, *Onos lras* 358 Cèbe; *Strabo* 10.3.12, 22; *Verg. A.* 9.600-1; *Hsch. s.v. Idaia*; F. Bömer on *Ov. F.* 182.

<sup>78</sup> *Hdt.* 1.80.1 (Cyzicus); *Strabo* 14.1.40 and *Plut. Them.* 30.6 (Magnesia); *Arr. An.* 5.6.4 (Dindyma; the plural also in *Ov. F.* 4.234). S. Mitchell, *Anatolia*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1993) II.22

mother of Kybele in the account of Dionysius Scythobrachion (above). However, in Mycenaean times the Greeks also had a Divine Mother (PY Fr1202), and the two Mothers may have soon become identified.<sup>79</sup>

Now Timotheus has introduced both the Mother of the Gods and Agdistis in his story, but that was one goddess too many. This is also clear from the other three accounts that we have discussed: they all make use of either Kybele or Agdistis, but none retains them both. Presumably, Timotheus thought that Agdistis would be insufficiently known to his public, and thus he introduced the Mother of the Gods to represent the ecstatic side of the goddess. Yet he apparently also felt that he could not do without Agdistis who represented the hermaphroditic side, and thus Timotheus introduced them both into his story. This narrative trick apparently worked outside Pessinous, as the versions of Hermesianax and Dionysius Scythobrachion show, but it did not catch on in Pessinous itself. This becomes clear from Strabo, who in his report of his visit of about 50 BC writes that Pessinous contains ‘a temple of the Mother of the Gods that is deeply venerated. They call her Agdistis’ (12.5.3). In other words, the locals had rejected the Greek innovation and stuck to the original name of their goddess, Agdistis, and that is why Pausanias too did not hear anything about Kybele or the Mother of the Gods. Yet in due time the Greek tradition caught up with Pessinous and in later Roman times Agdistis is called ‘Mother of the Gods’ on coins and three local inscriptions.<sup>80</sup>

Agdistis was the name of the local mountain Agdus (so Arnobius) or Agdistis (Pausanias 1.4.5) of Pessinous,<sup>81</sup> which is not otherwise attested in literary sources. Fortunately, though, Louis Robert has published several coins that carry the name

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observes that ‘there is remarkably little evidence that the Pessinuntine cult of Meter Dindymene travelled’, noting *MAMA* VIII.363.

<sup>79</sup> For the place of the Mother of the Gods in Athens see Borgeaud, *La Mère*, 31-55; R. Parker, *Athenian Religion* (Oxford, 1996) 159-60, 188-94; N. Robertson, ‘The Ancient Mother of the Gods. A Missing Chapter in the History of Greek Religion’, in Lane, *Cybele*, 239-304.

<sup>80</sup> Inscriptions: *IGR* III.225, 230; P. Lambrechts and R. Bogaert, ‘Asclépios, archigalle pessinontien de Cybèle’, in J. Bibauw (ed.), *Hommages à Marcel Renard*, 3 vols (Brussels, 1969) II.405-14. Coins: J. Devreker and M. Waelkens (eds.), *Les fouilles de Rijksuniversiteit Gent à Pessinonte* I (Brugge, 1984) 173-4, nos 1-10.

<sup>81</sup> Strabo (12.5.3) calls the mountain Dindymon and says that it gave the name Dindymene to the goddess, just like Kybele was named after Mt Kybela (plural, strangely enough). For (Meter) Dindymene see Hdt. 1.80.5; AR 1.1125; AP 7.728; Hor. C. 1.16.5; Strabo 10.3.12, 12. 8.11, 13.4.5, 14.1.40; Mart. 8.81.1; Arr. An. 5.6.4; Paus. 7.17.9, 7.20.3, 8.46.4; Hsch. 2/3 1858, 6 157; *I. Prusa* 1021; *MAMA* I.338

Agdistis and show a mountain;<sup>82</sup> it may well have been the highest or most prominent peak of Mt Dindymon. Apparently, Agdistis was the local variant of the type of mountain goddess that had also generated Kybele.

As regards Gallus, recent studies of Kybele and/or Attis have argued that it were the invading Gauls that gave the name Galli to the priests of Pessinous and the river Gallos.<sup>83</sup> This explanation cannot be true. As we have seen, Timotheus probably already mentioned the castration of Gallus, who seems to have been the king and the mythical reflection of Attis' eunuch priests, just like Attis himself. His name, then, predated the invasion of the Gauls;<sup>84</sup> a Gallos even occurs in the genealogy of the Cappadocian kings (Diod. Sic. 31.19.1) but we do not know the antiquity of this (undoubtedly imaginary) ancestor. Moreover, Gallus' name can hardly be separated from the name of the river Gallos, which was already called so before the arrival of the Gauls, since Timotheus (*apud* Alexander Polyhistor) calls the neighbouring peoples Potamogallitai, just as Promathidas (*FGrH* 430 F 6), a contemporary of Alexander, called them Potamogallenoï.<sup>85</sup> There seems therefore no reason to doubt the ancient explanation that the Galli were named after the river Gallos or its eponymous king Gallos.<sup>86</sup>

Soon after Timotheus the name of the priests became known widely known in Greece. We meet a Gallus perhaps first in an anecdote about the philosopher Arcesilaus (*apud* Diog. Laert. 4.43), and subsequently the name occurs in Callimachus (F 411 Pfeiffer; note also *Iambi* III.35),<sup>87</sup> Rhianus (*AP* 6.173 = 3236-41 GP), Dioscorides (*AP* 6.220 = 1539-54 GP), Antipater (*AP* 6.219 = 608-31 GP) and 'Simonides' (*AP* 6.217 = 3304-13 GP). Alexander Aetolus (*AP* 7.709 = 150-55 GP)

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<sup>82</sup> Robert, *A travers de l'Asie Mineure*, 236, who on p. 238 note 69 refers to the epigraphical bibliography with the varying forms of the name, such as Agdissis, Aggistis, Angdisis, Angistis or Anggdistis.

<sup>83</sup> Borgeaud, *La Mère*, 119-20; Lane, 'The Name of Cybele's Priests, the Galloi'; S. Takacs, 'Kybele', *Der neue Pauly* 6 (1999) 950-56 at 951; Lancellotti, *Attis*, 101 note 203.

<sup>84</sup> As was seen already by Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle*, 292.

<sup>85</sup> For the river and its name see M. Waelkens, 'Pessinunte et le Gallos', *Byzantion* 41 (1971) 349-73; J. Tischler, *Kleinasiatische Hydronomie* (Wiesbaden, 1977) 56

<sup>86</sup> Call. F 411 Pfeiffer; Alex. Polyh. *FGrH* 273 F 74; Ov. *F.* 4.361ff.; Pliny, *NH* 5.147; Hdn. 1.11.2; Festus 84L; *Et. Magnum* 220.28; App. *Prov.* 1.67; Macar. *Prov.* 2.92.

<sup>87</sup> Note also the reference to a Gallus in F 193.35-6 Pfeiffer, cf. A. Kerkhecker, *Callimachus' Book of Iambi* (Oxford, 1999) 78-80; B. Acosta-Hughes, *Polyeideia. The Iambi of Callimachus and the Archaic Iambic Tradition* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2002) 245f.

refers to them without mentioning their name and is therefore commonly overlooked in this respect.<sup>88</sup>

As regards Attis we must observe first that this form of the name is not attested in palaeo-Phrygian inscriptions,<sup>89</sup> where we find only Ates and Ata:<sup>90</sup> the name Attis is clearly a Greek invention, as the oldest inscription with the name, Timotheus and Dionysius Scythobrachion (?) attest. On the other hand, Demosthenes, Neanthes, Hermesianax, Nicander (*Al.* 8), Arrian (*Tact.* 33) and Pausanias call the god Attes, whereas Dioscorides (*AP* 6.220, 3 = 1541 GP) names his priest of Kybele Atys.<sup>91</sup> There seems to have been no authoritative tradition in this respect.

The first time that we hear of Attis in Pessinous itself is in 189 BC, when the Roman consul Cn. Manlius Vulso campaigned against the Galatians. When he had crossed the Sangarius river, two Galli appeared in full ornament ‘on behalf of Attis and Battakos,’<sup>92</sup> the priests of the Mother of the Gods at Pessinous’.<sup>93</sup> Apparently a double priesthood was in charge of the cult, and we may perhaps compare the occasion when in 190 BC Livius Salinator threatened to besiege Sestus and *duo Galli* came out to beseech him (*Pol.* 21.6.7; *Liv.* 37.9.9). A series of letters from Eumenes II and Attalos II to Attis between 163 and 155 shows that ‘Attis’ was a title rather than the personal name of an individual priest and that, moreover, the ‘Attis’ was clearly the more prominent member of this duo.<sup>94</sup> As Aioiorix, the Galatian name of the brother of this ‘Attis’, demonstrates, the Galatians had taken over the supervision of the cult, and they may well have skipped the traditional castration of the high priest! It seems, then, that after 300 BC Pessinous had started to differentiate between the

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<sup>88</sup> E. Magnelli, *Alexandri Aetoli testimonia et fragmenta* (Florence, 1999) 234-8.

<sup>89</sup> *Contra* Lancellotti, *Attis*, 34: ‘The name Attis is quite widespread in Phrygia’. It is therefore misleading when Lancellotti, *Attis*, 34-5 speaks about ‘the name of Attis (in the Old Phrygian variant form “Ates”)’.

<sup>90</sup> Zgusta, *Personennamen*, 119-21; C. Brixhe and Th. Drew-Bear, ‘Trois nouvelles inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes de Çepni’, *Kadmos* 21 (1982) 64-87 at 70, 83; Brixhe and Lejeune, *Corpus des inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes*, I.G-107, 118-19, 128, 221, 224, 234, W-10, Dd-101; E. Varinlioglu, ‘The Phrygian Inscriptions from Bayindir’, *Kadmos* 31 (1992) 10-20; A.M. Darga, ‘Quelques remarques sur les fouilles de Sarhöyük-Dorylaion’, *MDAI(I)* 43 (1993) 313-17 at 316f

<sup>91</sup> For further variants see Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 359f.

<sup>92</sup> For the epichoric character of the name Battakos see Robert, *Noms*, 533f.

<sup>93</sup> *Pol.* 21.37.5; *Diod. Sic.* 36.13; *Liv.* 38.18.9; *Plut. Mar.* 17.

<sup>94</sup> For the correspondence see C.B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence of the Hellenistic Age* (Yale, 1934) nos 55-61, republished by B. Virgilio, *Il “tempio stato” di Pessinunte fra Pergamo e Roma nel II-I secolo a. C.* (Pisa, 1981); see also Devreker and Waelkens, *Fouilles de Pessinonte*, 218f.

mythical figure Attes and the priest 'Attis', with the latter variant of the name apparently imported from Greece.

A development from name to title is not totally unique. In Ephesus, the eunuch (!) priest of Artemis was called Megabyxos and this title must have developed from the name of one of the first Persians that took over the office.<sup>95</sup> Now in Timotheus' account the king is called Gallus, as we have seen. Can it be that in his time the highest priest was perhaps called Gallus and that things had changed in the period between him and 190 BC, just as there may have been some changes in the Ephesian cult of Artemis after the take-over by the Persians? In any case, the mythical Attis did not rise to great prominence in Pessinous, since he is mentioned only once on local inscriptions and appears on coins only with the goddess and never just by himself.<sup>96</sup>

Even though we may now know a bit more about the protagonists of the cult, much remains obscure about the myth and the ritual. The myth apparently told of the miraculous birth of Agdistis, the birth of Attis, the amorous relationship between the two, the wedding with the daughter of the king, the castration of Attis and his father-in-law Gallus, and Attis' death. However, the exact Pessinuntine narration around 300 BC, if there was indeed an authoritative narration, is no longer recoverable. It is clear, though, that the myth made use of ancient Anatolian traditions and explained the relationship between Agdistis and Attis, which may well have been the model for the self-presentation of the Galli, the castration of the priests and, perhaps, the yearly festival in memory of Attis.

On the ritual level it is clear that we have to do with a festival and a priesthood, the Galli. The festival is recoverable only in outline, as we have only two early sources. The festival took place in the spring, as it later did in Rome,<sup>97</sup> and an important element was the mourning for Attis, apparently in front of an image of him.<sup>98</sup> However, 'ritual logic' requires that lamentations are succeeded by rejoicings, just as in the later Roman ritual the setting up of the pine (22 March) and the *dies*

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<sup>95</sup> Office: Tzetzes, *Chil.* 8.400 (painting of a M. by the Ephesian Parrhasios [*ca.* 440-380]); Xen. *Anab.* 5.3.6; Pliny, *NH* 35.132 (tomb of a M. by Antidotos [earlier fourth century]); Pliny, *NH* 35.93 (painting of a procession of a M. by Apelles); Strabo 14.1.23; Plut. *M.* 58d, 471-2; Quint. 5.12.21, who also mentions paintings; Heraclit. *Ep.* 9; Ael. *VH.* 2.2; W. Burkert, *Die Griechen und der Orient* (Munich, 2003) 113-5. Name: Hdt. 3.70, 153, 160 and 7.82, 121; Thuc. 1.109.3, etc.

<sup>96</sup> Devreker and Waelkens, *Fouilles de Pessinonte*, 173-4, nos 1-4, 222 no. 25.

<sup>97</sup> Scholion on Nic. *Al.* 8e; for the Roman evidence see the full bibliography in Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 500 note 2.

*sanguinis* (23 March) were followed by the Hilaria (24 March). It is here that I would like to place the tree. Recent studies of Attis have stressed the absence of the pine in his Phrygian cult (above). Yet it is hard to imagine that the Romans would have invented the presence of the pine completely *ex nihilo*, the more so as pine cones are already attested in the Mater Magna's second-century (BC) shrine on the Palatine.<sup>99</sup> And indeed, Pausanias' mention of an almond tree and the Greek name of the *dendrophori*, the central actors of the Roman ritual of the *Arbor intrat*,<sup>100</sup> do suggest an Anatolian origin of the Roman pine. Now we know that a decorated tree was part of the Hittite New Year festival, the spring EZEN *purulliyaš*, as symbol of the blessings desired for the new year.<sup>101</sup> As Dionysius' version of the Attis myth relates that the mourning was preceded by infertility of the land,<sup>102</sup> we would expect that the ritual would end this desolate situation. The ritual of the tree, perhaps an almond tree, would well fit such a new beginning.

At the spring festival of Atargatis in Hierapolis, decorated tree-trunks also played a prominent role and it seems that during this festival the prospective Galli of Atargatis castrated themselves.<sup>103</sup> Given this resemblance, it is hardly probable that there is not some connection between this festival and that of Attis in Pessinous, even though the historical lines are totally obscure. It may therefore well have been the case that prospective Galli also castrated themselves during Attis' festival in Pessinous.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Dionysius Scythobrachion (?) *apud* Diod Sic. 3.59.7; Scholion on Nic. *Al.* 8e.

<sup>99</sup> Roller, *In Search of God*, 279.

<sup>100</sup> See most recently J.-M. Salamito, 'Les dendrophores dans l'empire chrétien. A propos du Code Théodosien XIV,8,1 et XVI,10,20,2', *MEFRA* 99 (1987) 991-1018; R. Rubio Rivera, 'Collegium dendrophorum: corporación profesional y cofradía metróaca', *Gerión* 11 (1993) 175-83; R. Gordon, *Der neue Pauly* 2 (1997) 477; V.-M. Liertz, 'Die Dendrophoren aus Nida und Kaiserverehrung von Kultvereinen im Nordwesten des Imperium Romanum', *Arctos* 35 (2001) 115-28.

<sup>101</sup> V. Haas, *Geschichte der hethitischen Religion* (Leiden, 1994) 742-47, 718f.

<sup>102</sup> Dionysius Scythobrachion (?) *apud* Diod Sic. 3.59.7.

<sup>103</sup> Burkert, *Structure*, 137; Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 500-04.

<sup>104</sup> For a detailed discussion of the nature of these castrations see A. Rousselle, *Porneia* (Oxford, 1988) 122-28, who overlooked the probable eye-witness report by Aretaios, cf. A. Henrichs, 'Dromena und Legomena', in F. Graf (ed.), *Ansichten griechischer Rituale. Geburtstags-Symposium für Walter Burkert* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1998) 33-71 at 56-7; note also the pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* 11.14.



have survived otherwise or not achieved the important function they evidently coveted.

#### 4. *Attis' arrival in Rome and the poem of Catullus*

In 204 BC Kybele was introduced in Rome as *Mater Deum Magna Idaea* or, more shortly, *Mater Magna* – not *Magna Mater*, as even the most recent British history of Roman religion writes.<sup>113</sup> The mention of Ida, the name of the Mother of the Gods, the *dendrophori* (§ 3), the Greek language of the cult songs (Servius on Verg. *G.* 2.394) and the iconography of the Roman votive figurines all support Varro's notice that the goddess came from Pessinous via Pergamum,<sup>114</sup> and not straight from Pessinous as most sources tell us.<sup>115</sup> Although second-century terracotta votive figurines of Attis were found at the shrine of the Mater Magna on the Palatine,<sup>116</sup> in the surviving literature his name appears for the very first time in Roman literature in Catullus 63.<sup>117</sup>

Catullus wrote his poem at a time that was interested in the cult of Kybele and, occasionally, Attis. In the years 80-67 BC,<sup>118</sup> Varro wrote about the cult of Kybele in his Menippean satires *Cynus* (fr. 79 Cèbe), and *Eumenides* (fr. 132-43 Cèbe);<sup>119</sup> somewhere between 80 and 45 BC, Laberius put on his mime *Galli* (Gellius 6.9.3),

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<sup>113</sup> M. Beard *et al.*, *Religions of Rome*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1998) I.96; similarly, Morisi, *Catullo*, 81, cf. G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer* (Munich, 1912<sup>2</sup>) 317-25; K. Ziegler, “‘Mater Magna’ oder ‘Magna Mater’”, in *Hommages à Marcel Renard*, II.845-55; add *I. Pessinus* 146: *Mêtêr Magnê*. For the introduction of the cult see most recently Graf, *Nordionische Kulte*, 304-7; Bremmer and Horsfall, *Roman Myth*, 105-11 (by Bremmer); E. Gruen, *Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy* (Leiden, 1990) 5-33; Borgeaud, *La Mère*, 89-130.

<sup>114</sup> Varro: *LL* 6.15, cf. K. Kuiper, ‘De Matre Magna Pergamenorum’, *Mnemosyne* NS 30 (1902) 277-306. Pergamene influence: Roller, *In Search of God*, 212, 278. Beard, *Religions of Rome*, I.96 goes too far in not even mentioning Pessinous.

<sup>115</sup> Diod. Sic. 34.33.2; Strabo 12.5.3; Val. Max. 8.15.3; Sil. It. 17.3; App. *Hann.* 56.233; Hdn. 1.11.1.

<sup>116</sup> Roller, *In Search of God*, 275-79, who thus refutes the objections raised by P. Lambrechts, *Attis en het feest der Hilariën* (Amsterdam, 1967) 3; Thomas, ‘Magna Mater and Attis’, 1506.

<sup>117</sup> Although U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Hellenistische Dichtung*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1924) II.293 rightly states of Varro's *Eumenides*: ‘da kam auch der wirkliche Attis vor’.

<sup>118</sup> For the chronology see E. Zaffagno, ‘I problemi delle “Satire Menippee”’, *Studi Noniani* 4 (1977) 207-52 at 208-12.

<sup>119</sup> In his poem Catullus probably alluded to both satires. J.-P. Cèbe, *Varron, Satires Ménippées* 3 (Rome, 1975) 338 persuasively compares Varro's *tua templa ad alta fani properans citus iere* (*Cynus* 79) with both Catullus' *agite ite ad alta, Gallae, Kybeles nemora simul* (12) and *viridem citus adit Idam properante pede chorus* (30). Th. Roper, *Eumenidum reliquiae*, 3 vols (Danzig, 1858) III.39 had already compared Varro's *apage in*



just at the time when Valerius Messalla Niger also mentioned the Attis myth (§ 3). In 57 and 56 BC Cicero paid much attention to the battle for the office of ‘Attis’ between Deiotarus and Brogitarus in Pessinous,<sup>120</sup> exactly in the years that Catullus served in Bithynia under Memmius as propraetor: he may well have regularly heard about the affair.<sup>121</sup> It is in this very same decade that Catullus’ friend Caecilius wrote a poem about the *Dindymi domina*, as we know from Catullus’ reaction (35.14) and that Lucretius published his *De rerum natura* with his picture of the cult of Kybele (2.600-60).<sup>122</sup> It is attractive to date Catullus’ poem, too, to these early years of the 50s, and see perhaps a connection with the struggle for the main office in Pessinous. Such a connection would explain why in his poem the chief, *duce me* (15) and *per nemora dux* (32), of the group of castrated Galli (17) is called Attis, as there is no Hellenistic example of the name in this capacity.

Catullus’ *Attis* has received much attention over the years, but here we will limit ourselves to the religious aspects of Catullus’ poem. Such a point of view is of course one-sided, but it may not be without interest, given the mainly literary attention over the years and the almost total lack of attention to the religious side of the poem in the more recent commentaries of Fordyce (1961), Quinn (1970), Thomson (1997) and Morisi (1999), in contrast to the older ones of Ellis (1889) and Kroll (1929<sup>2</sup>).

The poem starts with the hurried voyage of Attis to the wooded mountain range of Ida (2-3, 30, 70).<sup>123</sup> Attis is not introduced at all, but the central position of his name in the opening line and many others (27, 32, 42, 45, 88) leaves no doubt about his pre-eminent position within the poem.<sup>124</sup> The choice of Ida is not evident

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*dierectum a domo nostra istam insanitatem (Eum. 142) with Catullus’ procul a mea tuos sit furor omnis, era, domo: alios age incitatos, alios age rapidos (92-3).*

<sup>120</sup> Cic. *De domo sua* 60, 129; *De har. resp.* 28; *Pro Sestio* 57-9.

<sup>121</sup> Curiously, F. Cairns, ‘Catullus in and about Bithynia: Poems 68, 10, 28 and 47’, in D. Braund and C. Gill (eds.), *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome. Studies in Honour of T.P. Wiseman* (Exeter, 2003) 165-90 does not mention our poem.

<sup>122</sup> For Lucretius’ picture see more recently L. Lacroix, ‘Texte et réalités à propos du témoignage de Lucrèce sur la Magna Mater’, *J. des Savants* 1982, 11-43; J. Jope, ‘Lucretius, Cybele, and Religion’, *Phoenix* 39 (1985) 250-62; J. Schmidt, *Lukrez, der Kepos und die Stoiker* (Frankfurt, 1990) 113-25; K. Summers, ‘Lucretius’ Roman Cybele’, in Lane, *Cybele*, 337-65; C. Craca, *Le possibilità della poesia. Lucrezio e la Madre frigia in De rerum natura II 598-660* (Bari, 2000).

<sup>123</sup> For the prologue see P. Fedeli, ‘Il prologo dell’*Attis* di Catullo’, in *Studi di poesia latina in onore di A. Traglia*, 2 vols (Rome, 1979) I.149-60.

<sup>124</sup> T. Means, ‘Catullus lxiii – Position of the Title-Name “Attis,” and its Possible Significance’, *CP* 22 (1927) 101f.

and must have been motivated by the official Roman name of Kybele, *Mater Deum Magna Idaea* (above), and the Trojan descent of the Romans.<sup>125</sup> The mention of fury (*stimulatus furenti rabie*: 4), a major theme in the poem,<sup>126</sup> prepares the reader for Attis' instant castration with a flint (5),<sup>127</sup> as they already did in Pessinous (Arnobius 6.11). However, from the first century onwards less 'manly' prospective members (*excusez le mot*) of the cult may also have used a knife.<sup>128</sup> By this deed Attis lost his manhood and thus, in the logic of gender, had become a woman. The text signals this by both a change of gender to the feminine (8, 11, 14-5, etc.)<sup>129</sup> and the use of the term Gallae (12), a device that Catullus had borrowed from a Hellenistic predecessor (below). Vergil followed suit and wrote *O vere Phrygiae neque enim Phryges* (A. 9.617), even though the Homeric model is hardly to be overlooked (*Il.* II.235, VII.96); not surprisingly, then, the Galli are called *semiviri* by Varro and *semimares* by Ovid.<sup>130</sup>

At first Catullus leaves the identity of the object of his worship literally somewhat in the dark: *opaca ... loca Deae* (3). However, the tambourine (8-9), the instrument *par excellence* of Kybele already in Greece (below), betrays the name of the goddess, although *Cybebe* (9) is a much more frequent variant of her name in Roman than in Greek poetry.<sup>131</sup> Even closer to the world of Attis is her name *Dindymena domina* (13), an expression almost similar to the *Dindymi dominam* of Catullus' friend Caecilius (35.14) and perhaps a homage to him. In Latin, we find both Dindymon and Dindyma, which, curiously, is the same alternation between the

<sup>125</sup> For the Roman association of Kybele with Ida and their interest in that mountain, see Lucr. 2.611; Verg. A. 9.617, 10.252 and S.J. Harrison *ad loc.*; Ov. F. 4.182; Liv. 29.10.5; Stat. Theb. 10.170.

<sup>126</sup> Note also *demens* (90), *furens* (4), *furibundus* (31, 54), *furor* (38, 78-9, 92), *rabidus* (38, 93) and *rabies* (4, 44, 57). The theme is discussed by Syndikus, *Catull* II, 92, but overlooked in the useful enumerations of key themes by J.P. Elder, 'Catullus "Attis",' *AJPh* 68 (1947) 394-403 at 402-3 and G.N. Sandy, 'The Imagery of Catullus 63', *TAPA* 99 (1968) 389-99.

<sup>127</sup> For this traditional usage of the flint or a pot sherd see Lucilius, *Sat.* 7; Ov. F. 4.237; Plin. NH. 35.165; Juv. 6.514; Mart. 3.81.3; Plut. Nic. 13.4; Min. Fel. 23.4, 24.12.

<sup>128</sup> Pliny, NH. 35.165; Juv. 2.116, 6.514; Stat. Theb. 12.227; Mart. 2.45.2, 3.24.10 and 81.3, 9.2.14; Lact. Inst. 5.917; Manetho, Ap. 5.179-80; Prud. Perist. 10.1081; Bömer on Ov. F. 4.237; G. Sanders, 'Gallos', in *RAC* 8 (1972) 984-1034 at 1004. Philippus, AP 6.94.5 (= 2724 GP) calls the knife ⵙⵓⵔⵓⵙ with an evident allusion to the river Sangarios near Pessinous (§ 3).

<sup>129</sup> For a brief discussion of the text-critical aspects of this change see H.P. Syndikus, *Catull*, 2 vols (Darmstadt, 1990) II.85.

<sup>130</sup> *Semiviri*: Varro, *Eum.* 140 Cèbe; Verg. A. 4.215, 12.97; Sen. Ep. 108.7; Sil. It. 17.20; Stat. Ach. 2.78; Mart. 3.91.1, 9.20.8. *Semimares*: Ov. F. 4.183.

<sup>131</sup> *ThLL* s.v. *Cybebe*.

singular and plural that we find between Kybel(l)on and Kybela (§ 3). It is her mountain that is the goal of Attis and his group.

However, we only occasionally hear of Galli worshipping Kybele in the mountains, whereas we know very well a group of women – and remember that we are talking here about ‘women’ – that regularly went into the mountains for cultic reasons, namely the Maenads. And they are exactly whom Catullus is referring to here; in fact, he even calls the mountains the area of the Maenads (23) and Attis’ group a *thiasus* (27; similarly used in 64.254), the technical term for the Dionysiac group. This connection between the cults of Kybele and Dionysos is not new. It had already struck Strabo (10.3.12-6), who, probably via Apollodorus,<sup>132</sup> provides us with some important testimonies for this development. This becomes already epigraphically visible in Olbia in the sixth century (*SEG* 48.1020), but in literature it takes really off in Euripides after fleeting appearances in Aeschylus (F 57 Radt) and Pindar (fr. 70b.8-11 Maehler).<sup>133</sup> Ptolemaeus Philopater was even called Gallos as he had himself tattooed with ivy (*Et. Magnum* 220).

Given the *rapprochement* between Kybele and Dionysos, it is hardly surprising that scholars have drawn attention to the fact that in this epyllion Catullus draws on both Metroac and Dionysiac literature. An example of the combination is the Hellenistic fragment that served as the example for the term Gallae:

G<sup>99</sup>i<sup>6</sup> o<sup>5</sup> 7<sub>5</sub>z<sup>2</sup> 2<sub>5</sub>1/8â<sup>5</sup> z<sup>1</sup> 3<sup>69</sup> 2<sub>1</sub>æ<sub>56</sub>2<sup>6</sup> 2/3<sub>5</sub>10i<sup>2</sup>3/8z  
i1z<sup>1</sup> 17<sub>1</sub>1/8i 3i<sub>7</sub>i<sup>4</sup>1/8ô<sub>7</sub>i<sup>6</sup> 8i<sup>8</sup> ã<sup>8</sup> t<sup>98</sup>1/8i 8<sub>5</sub>17i<sup>9</sup>i<sup>134</sup>

It is clear that the Gallae and the Mountain Mother refer to Kybele, whereas the thyrsos was typical of Dionysos, just as 3i<sub>7</sub>i<sup>4</sup>1/8ô<sub>7</sub>i<sup>6</sup> is attested only in a Maenadic context (Pratinas, *PGM* 708.2-3). ‘Running’, on the other hand, is suitable to both Galli (speed is a major theme in our poem)<sup>135</sup> and Maenads,<sup>136</sup> just like the castanets are attested for both Dionysos and Kybele.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>132</sup> E. Schwartz, *RE* I.2 (1894) 2869.

<sup>133</sup> See R. Kannicht on Eur. *Hel.* 1301-68; E.R.Dodds, J. Roux and R. Seaford on Eur. *Ba.* 78-9; Parker, *Athenian Religion*, 189 note 134; P. Fedeli on Prop. 3.17.35-6; S. Lavecchia, *Pindari dithyramborum fragmenta* (Rome, 2000) 141-44.

<sup>134</sup> This anonymous fragment is quoted by Heph. 12.3 and was once thought to be by Callimachus (fr. dub. 761 Pfeiffer), cf. D. Mulroy, ‘Hephaestion and Catullus 63’, *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 61-72; Courtney, ‘Three Poems’, 91; Harder, this issue.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. *celer* (1), *celerare* (26), *citatus* (2, 8, 18, 26), *citus* (30, 42, 74), *excitus* (42), *incitatus* (93), *mora cedat* (19), *properante pede* (30), *properipedem* (34), *rapidus* (16, 34, 44, 85) and *volitare* (25).



instruments are often mentioned together)<sup>145</sup> and the Phrygian *tibia*.<sup>146</sup> The Romans did not like these instruments. Horace thinks the tambourine *saeva* (C. 1.18.13-14) and Ovid its sound *inanis* (F. 4.183); it was even associated with effeminacy.<sup>147</sup> The sound of the cymbal *terret* (Ov. F. 4.190; Val. Flacc. 2.583) and is *rauca* (Prop. 3.17.36), like that of the flute (*rauco* ... *buxo*: Seneca, Ag. 689; *buxus circumsonat horrida cantu*: Claud. *De raptu Pros.* 2.269), and the horns are threatening with their *raucisono cantu* (Lucr. 2.619) and a *signum luctus* (Stat. *Theb.* 6.120-1). In short, this side of Kybele's cult evokes a picture of threatening, lugubrious cacophony rather than of harmonious and pleasant music.

Then he evokes the activities of the ivy-bearing Maenads who toss their heads in ecstasy (23), howl (24, 28: not Dionysiac, but again an unpleasant acoustic aspect of Kybele's rites), and swiftly wander about (above).<sup>148</sup> This is the area where he and his followers should speed to with their *citatis tripudiis* (26). Fordyce (*ad loc.*) rightly points out that the *tripudium* belongs to the ritual of the Salii,<sup>149</sup> but we should also note that the Salii were identified with the Kouretes (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.70-1), whom Lucretius (2.631) represented as leaping about in the service of the Mater Magna; moreover, the term soon became associated with ecstatic dances.<sup>150</sup> As jumps and whirling dances were also part of the Maenadic ritual, it is perhaps not surprising

<sup>145</sup> Bömer on Ov. F. 5.441.

<sup>146</sup> Cymbal: Aesch. F 57 with S. Radt *ad loc.*, but also note his second thoughts on the text of this fragment in Harder, *Noch einmal*, 441-4; AP 6.51.5 (3836 GP); Varro. *Eum.* 132 Cèbe; Prop. 3.17.36; Ov. F. 4.189; Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle*, 257-58. Tambourine: Aesch. F 71 Radt; Pind. fr. 61 Maehler; Eur. *Hel.* 1346, *Ba.* 59, 124, 156, *Cycl.* 205, fr. 586 N<sup>2</sup>; Diog. Athen. *TrGF* 45 F 1; AP 6.51.8 (anon. 3839 GP), 217.5 ('Simonides' 3308 GP), 218.6 (Alcaeus 139 GP), 219.9 (Antipater 616 GP), 220.10 (Diosc. 1548 GP); Varro, *Eum.* 140 and *Onos lyras* 358 Cèbe; Cat. 64.261; Lucr. 2.618-20; Prop. 3.17.33; Maec. fr. 5-6 Courtney; Ov. F. 4.183; Babrius 141.9; Vikela, 'Bemerkungen', 90 (connection with Kubaba in Carchemish). *Tibia*: Diog. Athen. *TrGF* 45 F 1; Call. F 193.34ff Pfeiffer; Varro, *Eum.* 139 Cèbe; Cat. 64.264; Lucr. 2.620; Tib. 2.1.86; Verg. A. 11.737; Tarrant on Sen. Ag. 689; Morisi, *Catullo*, 93.

<sup>147</sup> M.W. Dickey, 'The Speech of Numanus Remulus (Aeneid 9, 598-620)', *Papers Liverpool Lat. Sem.* 5 (1985) 165-221 at 175; add Quint. 5.12.21.

<sup>148</sup> Tossing of head in ecstatic cults: Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle*, 304; Bremmer, 'Greek Maenadism', 278-9; add Varro, *Eum.* 140 Cèbe; Lucr. 2.632; Maec. fr. 5-6 Courtney; Tac. *Ann.* 11.31; Quint. 11.3.71; Servius auct. on Vergil, A. 10.22. Howling: Verg. A. 7.395; Ov. F. 4.186, 341, AA 1.508, *Tr.* 4.1.42; Maec. fr. 5-6 Courtney; Luc. 1.567; Stat. *Silv.* 2.2.87-8; Mart. 5.41.3; Firm. Mat. *Err.* 3.3; Claud. *De raptu Pros.* 2.269, *Eutrop.* 2.302; Servius auct. on Vergil, A. 10.22; note also the *absonis ululatibus* of the followers of the Dea Syria in Apul. *Met.* 8.27.

<sup>149</sup> Hor. C. 4.1.27; Liv. 1.20.4; Plut. *Num.* 13; Festus 334L.

<sup>150</sup> Ov. F. 6.330; Apul. *Met.* 8.27; for the ecstatic dances of Kybele's worshippers see also P. Pachis, 'Gi<sup>99</sup>i<sup>95</sup> 21<sup>e</sup> 8<sup>b</sup> 5<sup>5</sup> 7<sup>2</sup> 1<sup>9</sup> 8<sup>4</sup> 0i<sup>9</sup>', in Lane, *Cybele*, 193-222.

to find in Accius' *Bacchae* Dionysos (probably) *in Parnaso inter pinos tripudiantem in circulis* (F 4 Dangel).<sup>151</sup> Once again we notice the merging of ecstatic techniques in both cults.

It is no wonder that the group got out of breath and became exhausted when they finally reached the *domum Cybebes* (35), their goal (20). The term *domus* is probably indicative of a Greek background, since *oikos* is a well-known Greek term for a more private 'sanctuary'.<sup>152</sup> They collapsed and fell asleep *sine Cerere* (36), a sign of their exhaustion rather than a reference to the required abstinence of bread in later times.<sup>153</sup> Once again the best parallel for such a collapse is found in Maenadic ritual. Euripides' *Bacchae* already noted 'welcome in the mountains whosoever from the running *thiasoi* falls to the ground' (135-7) and described their sleep from exhaustion (683).<sup>154</sup> And indeed, just like the members of Attis' *thiasus*, Maenads also fall on the ground from exhaustion. Plutarch, who had access to the female leader of the Delphic Maenads, the Thyiads, relates that about 353 BC they once had been so exhausted from their dancing on the mountains that they had fallen asleep in the agora of Amphisia.<sup>155</sup> Apparently, such scenes appealed to the Romans, since not only Catullus, but also Propertius (1.3.5-6) and Ovid (*Am.* 1.14.21-2, *Rem.* 596) briefly sketched the exhausted Maenads.<sup>156</sup>

When Attis wakes up from his sleep, he has also woken up from his fascination for the Mater Magna; the critical moment receives special attention through Catullus' spending four lines on the rising of the sun that symbolizes Attis

<sup>151</sup> See Bremmer, 'Greek Maenadism', 279 (whirling dances; add Welcker's comparison between maenads and derwishes as discussed by A. Henrichs, 'Welckers Götterlehre', in W.M. Calder *et al.*, eds., *Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker: Werk und Wirkung*, Stuttgart 1986, 179-229 at 222), 280 (jumps). For Accius and Euripides see I. Mariotti, 'Tragédie romaine et tragédie grecque', *MH* 22 (1965) 206-16.

<sup>152</sup> A. Henrichs, 'Despoina Kybele', *HSCP* 80 (1976) 253-86 at 278.

<sup>153</sup> *Contra* O. Weinreich, *Ausgewählte Schriften* II (Amsterdam, 1973) 489-527 ('Catulls Attisgedicht', 1936<sup>1</sup>) at 526: 'Aber das kann ja rationalistische Umwandlung der in der Vorlage versteckt angedeutenden kultischen  $1\frac{5}{6} \cdot \frac{1}{8} \hat{a}$  i sein' (farfetched and the more so as we do not have the *Vorlage*); Ellis *ad loc.*, who compares Arnob. 5.16; Lancellotti, *Attis*, 88, who sees it as expressing 'the dialectical opposition between these two goddesses' (i.e. Kybele and Ceres).

<sup>154</sup> For a probable parallel note also Chaeremon *TrGF* 71 F 14.

<sup>155</sup> For the episode and its representation by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema see Bremmer, 'Greek Maenadism', 274; add A. Henrichs, 'Der rasende Gott: Zur Psychologie des Dionysos und des Dionysischen in Mythos und Literatur', *A&A* 40 (1994) 31-58 at 51-56.

<sup>156</sup> For the motif in the *Culex* (122), see F. Leo, *Culex* (Berlin, 1891) 49.

seeing the light (39-43).<sup>157</sup> His thoughts now focus on his fatherland that he will never see again. The address *patria o mei* (50) was a Roman device when the place had not been previously specified,<sup>158</sup> but the qualifications *creatrix* and *genetrix* of the fatherland are rather ironic here and focus attention on the fact that Attis himself would never be able to sire an offspring. He now contrasts his elevated social position from before with his new low status in the cult of Kybele. Will he end up as a *Kybeles famula* (68)? A *famulus* is the property of a *dominus* or *domina*, and Varro (*Res div.* 16, fr. 269 Cardauns) already knew *Dominam proprie Matrem deum dici*, just as our source for this fragment, Serv. auct. on Verg. A. 3.113, observes: *haec eandem Eram appellari, hoc est Dominam tradunt*.<sup>159</sup> Indeed, Kybele was often called Despoina or Kyria in Greece, and *Domina* must be the translation of this Greek title;<sup>160</sup> it would fit this particular title that *famulus* was particularly used in relation to the followers of the Mater Magna.<sup>161</sup> However, in our poem, the ‘slaves’ do not address Kybele as *domina*, which would be against Latin usage, but as *era* (18), which is the typical term of address of slaves to their owner.<sup>162</sup> The term *famula* is also one more testimony to the development in Hellenistic times where cults started to flourish in which the worshippers saw themselves as the slaves of their autocratic divinities. This development is visible even in the New Testament where Paul regularly calls himself a ‘slave of God’ (*Romans* 1.1, etc.).<sup>163</sup> Attis continues with wondering ‘Will I be a Maenad, I only part of myself, I an infertile man?’<sup>164</sup> Once again we are struck by the merging of the Dionysiac and Metroac. Evidently, it made little difference whether one was a Maenad or a Gallus.

The result of all this soul-searching is that Attis already feels regret about his life choice: *iam iamque paenitet* (73). Such a regret naturally came *geminas deorum*

<sup>157</sup> For this part of the poem see especially P. Fedeli, ‘Dal furor divino al rimpianto del passato. Tecnica e stile di Catull 63.27-49’, *Giorn. It. Filol.* 29 (1977) 40-9.

<sup>158</sup> E. Dickey, *Latin Forms of Address* (Oxford, 2002) 300.

<sup>159</sup> Note that neither Thilo nor Cardauns capitalizes here.

<sup>160</sup> See the learned study by Henrichs, ‘Despoina Kybele’.

<sup>161</sup> Varro, *Eum.* 140 Cèbe; Cicero, *Leg.* 2.22; Liv. 37.9.9; Germ. 38; Val. Flacc. 3.19-20.

<sup>162</sup> For the usage of *domina* and *era* see Dickey, *Latin Forms of Address*, 77-99 and her ‘æ<sub>5</sub><sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>, 2/3<sub>6327</sub>†, *domine*. Greek Politeness in the Roman Empire’, *JHS* 121 (2001) 1-11.

<sup>163</sup> This aspect was already seen by Weinreich, *Ausgewählte Schriften* II, 527, but put in a wider Hellenistic context by H.W. Pleket, ‘Religious History as the History of Mentality: The ‘Believer’ as Servant of the Deity in the Greek World’, in H.S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship* (Leiden, 1981) 152-92 (although overlooking Weinreich); H.S. Versnel, *Ter unus* (Leiden, 1990) 90-1; Lightfoot, *Lucian, On the Syrian Goddess*, 538.

*ad aures* (75), the more so as Kybele/Agdistis was also a goddess *epêkoos*,<sup>165</sup> and the poem closes with a funny variant on a theme often treated in the *Greek Anthology*, namely the meeting of a Gallus with a lion, in which the Gallus chased away the lion with the tambourine.<sup>166</sup> In the version by Alcaeus (AP 6.218 = 134-43 GP) the Gallus even converts, so to speak, the lion, which starts to dance as a follower of Kybele. From the very beginning of her representations, Kybele had been connected with lions. Dionysius' Scythobrachion's (?) closing statement about the positioning of lions and panthers next to her statue (§ 3) is one more testimony to the merging of the Dionysiac and Metroac, since panthers are never associated with Kybele but typical of Dionysos.<sup>167</sup> In Catullus' case, though, he reversed the usual theme and let the outcome be that the lion effected that Attis *omne vitae spatium famula fuit* (90).<sup>168</sup>

In his closing prayer Catullus one more time mentions the *furor* of the *era* (92), but with a typical Roman *epipompê* he prays that this fury may pass to others.<sup>169</sup> Kybele might be a powerful goddess, but Catullus preferred to stay outside her sphere of influence. Some editors (Mynors 1958 = Fordyce 1961; Quinn 1970; Goold 1983) print the first line of this prayer (91) as: *dea, magna dea, Cybebe, dea domina Dindymi*, but this presents the wrong combination (*magna dea* instead of *dea magna*)<sup>170</sup> and disturbs the *tricolon crescendo* and anaphora, which are typical of ancient prayer.<sup>171</sup> So the line should be punctuated as: *dea magna, dea Cybebe, dea domina Dindymi* (with, e.g., Thomson 1997; Morisi 1999).

<sup>164</sup> For the frequent repetition of *ego* see J. Granarolo, 'Catulle ou la hantise du *moi*', *Latomus* 37 (1978) 368-86.

<sup>165</sup> O. Weinreich, *Ausgewählte Schriften* I (Amsterdam, 1969) 135, 147.

<sup>166</sup> AP 6.217 ('Simonides' 3304-13 GP), 6.218 (Alcaeus 134-43 GP), 6.219 (Antipater 608-31 GP) 6.220 (Diosc. 1539-54 GP), cf. A.F.S. Gow, 'The Gallus and the Lion', *JHS* 80 (1960) 88-93; P. Fedeli, 'Attis e il leone: dall'epigramma ellenistico al c. 63 di Catullo', in *Letterature comparate. problemi e metodo. Studi in onore de E. Paratore* I (Bologna, 1981) 247-56; E. Courtney, 'Three Poems of Catullus', *BICS* 32 (1985) 85-100 at 88-91; D. Gall, 'Catulls Attis-Gedicht im Licht der Quellen', *Würzb. Jahrb. Altert.* 23 (1999) 83-99.

<sup>167</sup> Lions: Simon, 'Kybele', *passim*. Panthers: C. Gasparri, 'Dionysos', *LIMC* III.1 (1986) 414514 at 461 nos 430-4.

<sup>168</sup> For a clever, if perhaps not totally persuasive, attempt in interpreting the behaviour of the lion as reflecting that of the Galli, cf. K. Shipton, 'The *iuvencæ* Image in Catullus 63', *CQ* 86 (1986) 268-70.

<sup>169</sup> For the type of prayer see E. Fraenkel on Aesch. Ag. 1573 and *Horace* (Oxford, 1957) 410-1; Weinreich, *Ausgewählte Schriften* II, 517-21 and *Ausgewählte Schriften* III (1979) 156-84; Versnel, 'Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer', in Versnel, *Faith*, 1-64 at 18-21.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Prop. 3.17.35: *dea magna Cybebe* and § 4 on Mater Magna instead of the usual Magna Mater.



## 5. Concluding observations

Catullus' poem, then, has no reference to the mythical Attis, just as Attis or Attes as a personal name is not attested in Rome before the first century AD,<sup>172</sup> when his name gradually becomes more frequent in the poets. Evidently, Attis was not a major cultic or mythical figure in Republican Rome.

In his major analysis of the poem from the religious point of view, Otto Weinreich made a very modern observation. According to him, we should look at the poem from the perspective of the psychology of religion, and suggested that we have to do here with a 'radikaler *Fall von religiöser Bekehrung*' (his italics).<sup>173</sup> Weinreich had clearly been influenced in this view by the recent appearance of Nock's classical study on conversion.<sup>174</sup> However, it is clear that conversion is not Catullus' focus. On the contrary, he pays no attention at all to the process that led to Attis' entry into Kybele's service. Admittedly, he does provide us with a fairly detailed description of the activities of Kybele's followers, but, as we have seen, in this description Catullus hardly distinguishes between the cults of Kybele and Dionysos. This seems to suggest a Greek literary model, since the two cults developed in rather different directions in the Roman world.<sup>175</sup>

What must have also struck the Roman reader is Catullus' stress on the elevated social status of Attis. Both the mention of the gymnasium (60-4) and the hint at his male lovers (64-6) show that Attis is represented as belonging to the *jeunesse dorée* of his town. This went of course totally against the ruling ideas of Catullus' time. Roman citizens and even slaves were forbidden to join the cult,<sup>176</sup> just as it was forbidden to Roman citizens and slaves to castrate themselves. In 77 BC the Roman consul Mamercus Aemilius Lepidus even reversed an earlier judgment that a Roman citizen turned Gallus could inherit: such a person, after all, was neither man nor

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<sup>171</sup> Weinreich, *Ausgewählte Schriften* II, 516-18.

<sup>172</sup> H. Solin, *Die griechischen Personennamen in Rom*, 3 vols (Berlin and New York, 1982) I.372 and *Die stadtrömischen Sklavennamen*, 3 vols (Stuttgart, 1996) II.300.

<sup>173</sup> Weinreich, *Ausgewählte Schriften* II, 490. Note also that he approvingly quotes Frazer, *Adonis*, 270 note 2, that 'als Schilderung eines Menschenschicksals' the poem 'gains greatly in force and pathos. The real sorrows of our fellow-men touch us more nearly than the imaginary pangs of the gods', of which he will have hardly missed the anti-Christian tenor.

<sup>174</sup> A.D. Nock, *Conversion* (Oxford, 1933).

<sup>175</sup> For the development of the Dionysiac cult in Hellenistic times see Burkert, 'Bacchic *Teletai* in the Hellenistic Age', in T. Carpenter and C. Faraone (eds.), *Masks of Dionysus* (Ithaca and London, 1993) 259-75.

<sup>176</sup> Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.19.5; Val. Max. 7.7.6; Jul. Obseq. 104.

woman.<sup>177</sup> One cannot escape therefore the thought that this part too came from a Greek model, although we need not agree with Weinreich that Catullus when writing these lines was thinking about a ‘Fahnenflucht aus dem Vaterland’ or an ‘Exil in der Welt des orientalisches-weibischen Wesens’.<sup>178</sup>

As we have already seen, the last part about the lion is equally a variation on a Hellenistic theme. This surely refutes Wiseman’s unwise suggestion that the poem was meant as a hymn for the Roman Megalesia.<sup>179</sup> One may also wonder whether the Roman population at large would have appreciated a hymn on a youth, whom everybody would associate with passive homosexuality,<sup>180</sup> with awful music (§ 4) and that was written in the ‘weakly effeminate galliambus’.<sup>181</sup> The poem, then, drew on a Hellenistic model or models,<sup>182</sup> even if the ‘quote’ from Accius shows that Roman models should not be overlooked either. The fact that Varro in his *Onos lyras* (358 Cèbe) had also mentioned the anecdote of the lion and the Gallus indicates that the anecdote exerted a certain fascination not only on the Hellenistic, but also on the Roman public. In his own variation, Catullus seems to have played with the lion theme in at least three different ways. First, he incorporated the theme into a larger poem, whereas his Hellenistic predecessors had focussed their poems on the theme only; Varro may in this respect have shown the way. Secondly, Catullus reverses the theme by letting the lion be the winner. And thirdly, in the Hellenistic anecdotes the event is related by the poet, who does not display any involvement in the cult of Kybele. In Catullus’ poem, though, the story-teller immediately proceeds with what the commentaries (Fordyce, Quinn) call a ‘concluding prayer’. This prayer starts with a most solemn invocation of Kybele (91) but also presents the poet indirectly as a

<sup>177</sup> Val. Max. 7.7.6; Jul. Obseq. 44; Dig. 48.8.4.2.

<sup>178</sup> Weinreich, *Ausgewählte Schriften* II, 522 (written in 1936!). For Weinreich’s political sympathies see H. Cancik, ‘Antike Volkskunde 1936’, *Der altsprachliche Unterricht* 25.3 (1982) 80-99.

<sup>179</sup> Contra T.P. Wiseman, *Catullus and His World. A Reappraisal* (Cambridge, 1985) 198-206. The interpretation is also rejected by Hutchinson, *Hellenistic Poetry*, 314 note 74 and by Fantuzzi and Hunter, *Musi e modelli*, 551 note 74.

<sup>180</sup> As appears from Martial’s use of the name Dindymus, cf. H.P. Obermayer, *Martial und der Diskurs über männliche “Homosexualität” in der Literatur der frühen Kaiserzeit* (Tübingen, 1998) 69-73.

<sup>181</sup> Mart. 2.86.5: *mollem debilitate galliambon*, tr. Shackleton Bailey, Loeb; see also Quint. 9.4.6. For the most recent analysis of this metre see Morisi, *Catullo*, 49-56.

<sup>182</sup> For this background see most recently K. Shipton, ‘The ‘Attis’ of Catullus’, *CQ* 87 (1987) 444-49 and, if hardly advancing our knowledge of this aspect, E. Lefèvre, ‘Alexandrinisches und Catullisches im Attis-Gedicht (c. 63)’, *RhM* 141 (1998) 308-28.

slave of the goddess by addressing her, ‘servilely and abjectly’,<sup>183</sup> as *era* (92). In other words, in the end the poet presents himself, rather tongue in cheek,<sup>184</sup> as a worshipper of the goddess, but as one who would rather do without the most characteristic quality of a follower of the goddess, that is, the loss of his manhood. Catullus, then, ate his cake and had it. He praised the powers of the goddess but wisely wanted to keep her as far away from himself as possible. Is that not the best attitude for any male student of Kybele and, especially, Attis?<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Dickey, *Latin Forms of Address*, 80 note 9.

<sup>184</sup> The humorous side of the poem is stressed (exaggerated?) by N. Holzberg, *Catull. Der Dichter und sein erotisches Werk* (Munich, 2002) 126-32.

<sup>185</sup> For comments and corrections of my English I am most grateful to Stephen Harrison, Theo van den Hout, Ruurd Nauta and, especially, Nicholas Horsfall.